

ably the balance sheets of others. The great trouble now is, men let these concerns run too long in a sick state, hoping against hope that a turn for the better will come, a hope they would not be allowed to cherish if their affairs were exposed to the more critical eye of experienced men. The man whose registered balance shows signs of approaching trouble could be quietly notified by the registrar to appear before the judge in chambers for examination. If he is found to be solvent, and there is no evidence of approaching trouble, his license could be confirmed. If not he could be ordered into liquidation. The plan would have the merit in time of purifying the commercial atmosphere, and leave legitimate trade to people qualified to handle it. Now, the second objection. False statements should be an indelible offense, punishable no less severely than for perjury. If the theory is good, don't condemn it because some person is likely to abuse it.

In a few words let me recount some of the things we might look for under a system of educational qualification, and compulsory registration. 1st. We should have a business community qualified to conduct their business affairs intelligently. 2nd. Business men as a class would take a higher place in the world. 3rd. Those dependent upon them by ties of nature would be surer of the continued support of husband and father. 4th. Men's confidence in one another would be strengthened, there would be more co-operation and consequently more happiness in life. 5th. All the elements which form the basis of trust would be a known quantity. 6th. Unwholesome competition would be checked. 7th. A higher order of commercial morality would prevail. 8th. Panics which are due to inexperienced, abnormal expansion, extravagance and other species of commercial insanity would be less frequent. 9th. Fifty-seven per cent of insolvencies, due to seven of the eleven causes of failure, representing nearly 150,000,000 liabilities, would be averted every year, and millions which cannot be estimated, would be saved to those who fail to succeed under present conditions.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I have told my dream. I will proceed in my imperfect way of performing the real duty assigned to me, that of advising young men who contemplate going into business. Let me assume you are tired of clerking. You have conceived the notion that business on your own account would be more congenial to your tastes and more in conformity with your ideas of manhood, and you proceed to lay your plans. What are they? If you are going into merchandising, the first three things to settle are 1st, kind of merchandising; 2nd, place of location; 3rd, amount of capital. These three things must be settled at the same time because they relate to one another and depend on one another. The first is easily settled. You should not engage in any kind of merchandising except the kind you have thoroughly learned. If you are a mechanic, or banker, or farmer, you are no more fit to be a merchant than you are for the judges bench. Second, select a town where there is room and where there is a demand for your particular line sufficient to justify another store. If you are a real good business man almost any good town will do where your goods are consumed; there are sure to be some poor business men there who will

drop out later on. Now how much capital have you? \$1,000. That is not very much, but it will do under certain conditions. How many goods are you going to buy? \$2,000 worth; half cash, balance in four months. Are you going to do a credit business? Yes, the farmers in the district up there are in the habit of buying on credit during the year and paying after harvest. If this is your plan, don't go into business. Under these conditions you will find business life abject slavery. The most obscure counter hopper in the employ of the Prince of Cranks would be the embodiment of conviviality and the very essence of manhood compared with a business life on these lines. I mean as long as business life on these lines would last—it could not last long.

If you have \$1,000 and sure of your location, secure a store of modest rent, yet not too far from the business centre. Buy a \$1,000 worth of goods, pay cash for them, the cash discount will be enough perhaps to pay your freight. Your \$1,000 may not buy all the goods you would like, but don't feel badly because you lose a sale now and then. Make careful note of your shorts, assort up often, but not in too large lots, not more than you are sure you can pay for at the end of the month. Do your own work as far as possible; mind your own business, never mind what your opposition does or says, sell every article at a profit, let the other man sell at a loss if he likes; keep sober, strictly sober; advertise judiciously; keep your stock neat and your shop tidy and your clothes clean; be polite and courteous to your customers; don't cheat; don't misrepresent; observe every promise, if you can't observe it don't make it; fear God and honor the Queen and you are likely to succeed.

Mr. Chairman let me interject, in parenthesis, a word addressed to the customers of this young man. Don't greet him first thing with a catalogue from some eastern city quoting impossible prices. Lists are sent to you I know naming figures for certain articles which give a profit to the departmental store keeper, but which after all are below cost. Every time you buy an article below cost you are unconsciously robbing some person. Not the big store keeper whose shops covers acres, but the poor women and girls who make these articles in sweat shops under the contract system. It is true you can get men's shirts from these merchant princes at prices which would put the young merchant in your town to shame, but I know the color would come to your own cheek if you knew that they were made for 19c per dozen by women and girls who have to find their own thread. The blouse you are wearing and which you show the young merchant with such an air of victory, and which you parade before your neighbor as the cheapest thing on earth, was made by your suffering sister for 2 cents and 1-12 of a cent. The cambric dress with lined waist which you count cheap is the dearest garment over mortal wore, its threads are waxed with human blood—it was made for 10 1-2 cents. The silk waist you wear bought from this catalogue was made by a woman or girl for 8 cents and 1 mill; ladies skirts are made for 30 cents per dozen, aprons for 22 cents per dozen, flannel shirts 20 cents per dozen, neckties \$1.25 per gross, overalls \$1.20 per dozen, and the poor girls find their own thread in every case. The circular containing these

facts concluded as follows:

"Somebody has toiled for too little; somebody has labored in vain; somebody's weary hands have fallen idly and forever pulseless because of too little pay; somebody has suffered to make this 'bargain day'; yet men and women who live by their day's wages, the rich who can afford to buy elsewhere, the harpies who buy 'bargains' to sell again, mingle in one wild rush in a struggle to buy what is being sold for less than cost."

Then deal at home, give the young merchant a chance, his success will benefit you, his failure will hurt you; the failure of your local town will depreciate the value of your property; every dollar you send away impoverishes some person at home, it may help you momentarily, but it is a boomerang.

Now let me turn to the young man. If the country is developing fast you may get rich rapidly, but under normal conditions your growth will be slow and sure. If you have larger capital you might be justified in selling goods on credit, but for every dollar's worth of credit given you should have a dollar additional capital. It is a wrong thing to lend to your customers money which properly belongs to your creditors. If I was a young man starting in business I would buy for cash and sell for cash, I would stick close to cash at both ends; it is safer, much safer, it is better, it makes life happier, it is cleaner business. As soon as you open business, start a set of books. If you know double entry, keep your books by that system, if not, single entry will do until your business gets large enough to employ a bookkeeper, when that time comes double entry is a necessity. Keep a careful record of your receipts and expenditures, open an account with every man you buy goods from. As soon as a bill of goods arrives and the invoice is checked off, credit the party from whom you bought, and at the end of the month add up the purchases and send your cheques for the various amounts to your various creditors less the cash discount, and if you are the right kind of a man the fact that your debts are paid will give you genuine pleasure. Carlyle says: "There is a perennial nobleness and even sacredness in work, there is always hope in a man who actually and earnestly works, in idleness alone is perpetual despair. The real desire to get work done will itself lead one more and more to truth, to nature's appointments and regulations which are truth." This truthful and beautiful quotation will apply with even greater force to the honest man who is working with the certainty of getting out of debt. No man comes nearer to nature's appointments in things of this world, than the honest man who struggles with a debt and discharges it at the appointed time. No man gets further away from nature's appointments, no man breaks in more certainty upon the natural trend of trade or gives a more violent shock to the industrial system than the man whose conscience is easy the day he defaults. If you find it necessary to ask your wholesale house for a line of credit, don't feel hurt if you are asked to furnish a statement of your affairs. Don't reply angrily that he can keep his goods, that you intend to pay your debts and if he don't want to trust you, you can find others who will." A letter of this kind is the best evidence you can give that you are